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Information will be available upon request in Braille, audiotape or by interpreter in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

PUBLIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Public Open-House Meeting
Wednesday, February 26, 2003
4 – 7 p.m.

Holiday Inn-Airport
Cascade Room
3300 Vista Avenue
Boise, ID

The meeting will be held in an open-house format so you can stop by anytime between 4 - 7 p.m. Project displays will provide you with information about the I-84 Orchard to Gowen project. **Your comments are important.** Project officials will be in attendance to listen to you and answer your questions.

This meeting is part of a series of public meetings and workshops the Idaho Transportation Department will hold throughout the project's development. Future meetings will be announced through mailings, media stories and advertisements.

Visit our Web site at www.orchard2gowen.com



I-84 ORCHARD TO GOWEN

MISSION

Using public input, develop a plan that addresses the transportation needs of the 21st century along the I-84 Orchard to Gowen corridor.

YOU'RE INVITED



Dear Citizens:

The Idaho Transportation Department would like to take this opportunity to invite you to the upcoming open-house public meeting for the I-84 Orchard to Gowen project. The open house will be held **Wednesday, February 26, from 4 – 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn on Vista Avenue in Boise.**

The purpose of the proposed project is to address the long-term needs of the roadway. Several key activities will be completed during this phase of the project, including a concept report, preliminary design, a construction staging plan, and a complete environmental analysis.

Now is the time to get involved. I invite you to become an active participant in the I-84 Orchard to Gowen project and help keep us moving forward... thinking ahead.

Sincerely,

Pamela Lowe
Idaho Transportation Department
District 3 Engineer



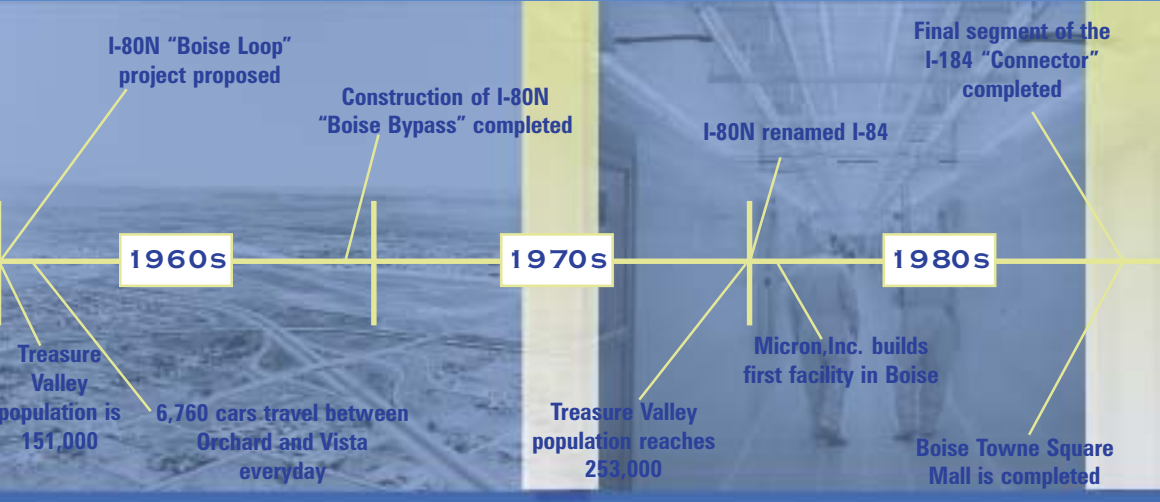
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MOVING FORWARD...

...THINKING AHEAD

PROJECT HISTORY



Thirty-five years ago motorists traveling across the Gem state to Boise used old Highway 30, a two-lane road that wound over country roads and through the Capital city. Travelers coming from the west entered Boise on Fairview Avenue and left the city going east on Federal Way. Those days are gone however, and what once was the city’s main artery was replaced in the late 60’s with an interstate system built for the 20th century.

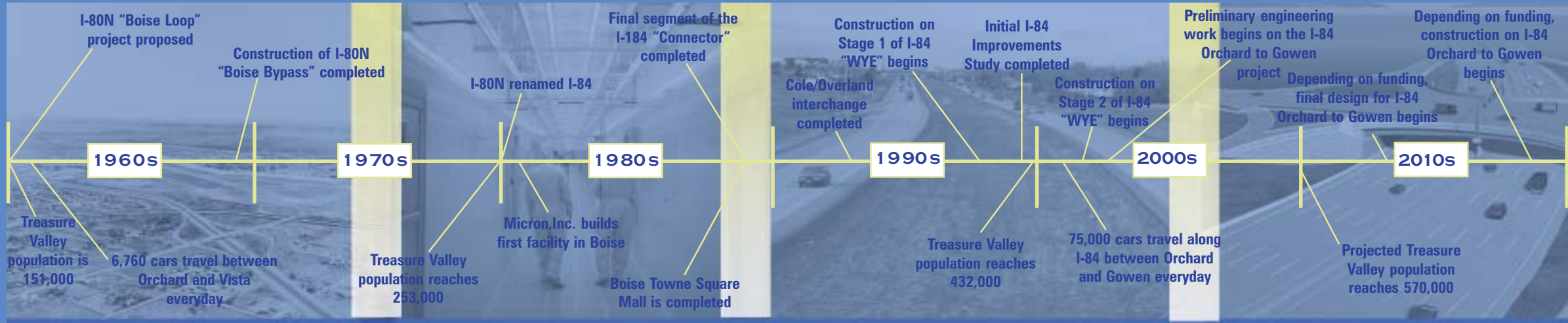
Now the interstate needs to be updated for the 21st century.

In 1960, planners proposed running the interstate through the heart of Boise, a move which would have taken 25 acres of Julia Davis Park next to the Boise River. This was called the “Boise Loop.” The idea was strongly opposed by residents. Articles in the Idaho Statesman during the period show give-and-take between community groups, citizens and the Idaho Highway Department. Ultimately, a “bypass” route was chosen.

PROJECT AREA



PROJECT HISTORY



Photos courtesy of the Idaho State Historical Society & Micron Technology, Inc.

Thirty-five years ago motorists traveling across the Gem state to Boise used old U.S. 30, a two-lane road that wound over country roads and through the Capital city. Travelers coming from the west entered Boise on Fairview Avenue and left the city going east on Federal Way. Those days are gone however, and what once was the city's main artery was replaced in the late 60's with an interstate system built for the 20th century.

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The bypass, which linked I-80N on the east and west sides of Boise, was built in the late 1960s. The interchanges and overpasses at Cole, Orchard, Vista, Broadway and Gowen were also completed about the same time. Rural sections of the interstate that replaced U.S. 30 were completed between 1960 and 1974.

Public input helped determine the location of the Boise section of the interstate in the 1960s. Today, the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) again seeks public input to help develop a plan addressing future transportation needs along the I-84 Orchard to Gowen corridor.

In 2001, ITD completed a study along the corridor that identified improvements needed to keep up with projected growth. The study recommends replacing the existing pavement, widening the interstate and replacing the existing interchanges from Orchard to Gowen. The transportation department is now moving to the next phase of work and is looking for public input.

WHO GIVES INPUT?

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

The Federal government provides financial assistance to the states to construct and improve the highway system. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) oversees the administration of federal dollars to the state projects. The FHWA will review and approve the environmental document. Without FHWA approval, federal funding cannot be used.

RESOURCE AGENCIES

Resource agencies are the state and federal regulatory agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality. They will help identify natural resource issues and assist ITD in assessing concerns and regulations related to the I-84 Orchard to Gowen project.

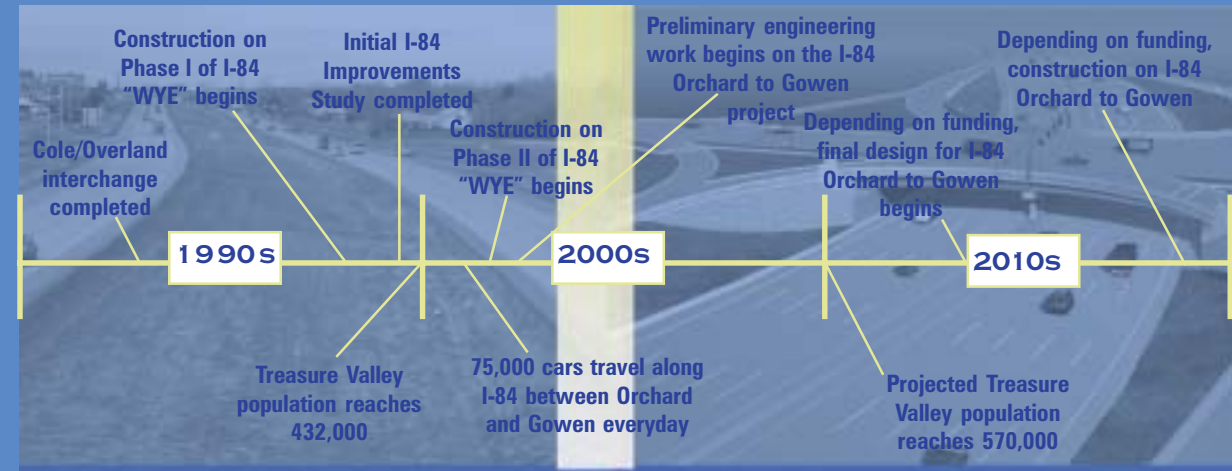


LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Local government officials will be invited to participate in public meetings throughout the project. The project team will keep them informed about the progress of the project and gather input to help guide the project development.

GENERAL PUBLIC

The public will be invited to attend several informational meetings and workshops throughout the I-84 Orchard to Gowen project. The purpose of the meetings will be to address concerns, answer questions and gather input on the proposed improvements along the project corridor. The public will be notified of public meetings through mailings, media stories and advertisements.



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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

A team led by Washington Infrastructure Services has begun the second phase of work. Using the 2001 improvement study as a platform, the project team will complete several key activities to design a project that addresses the future traffic needs along the corridor. These activities include a concept report, preliminary design, a construction staging plan and a complete environmental analysis.

A description of each of these activities follows:

The concept report will identify improvements that need to be made through the year 2035. It will identify options for the interchanges at Orchard, Vista, Broadway and Gowen and will determine the number of lanes needed on I-84 between the Orchard and Gowen interchanges.

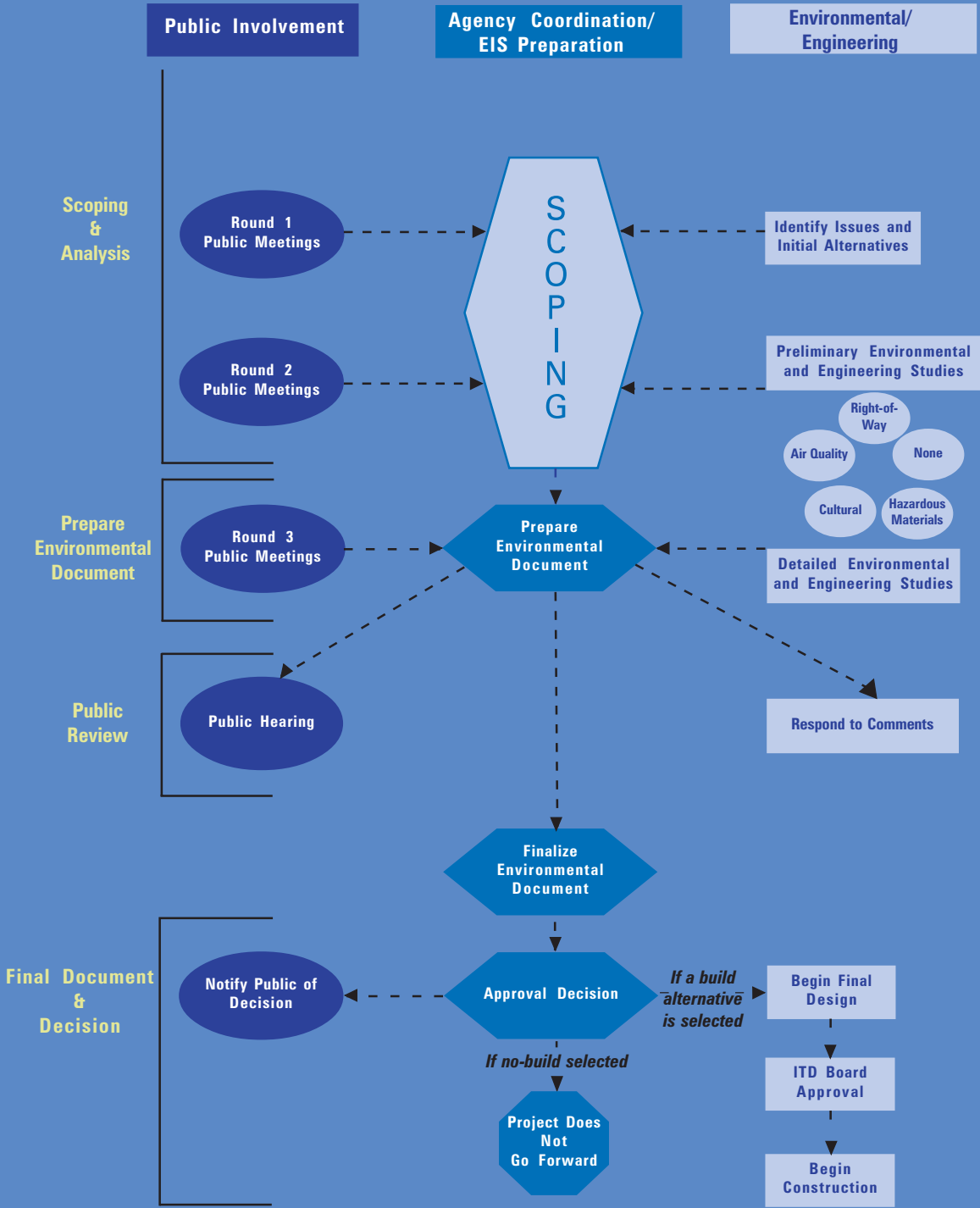
Preliminary design activities include surveying, traffic projections, right-of-way determination, interchange layout, highway engineering and cost estimates.

The construction staging plan will determine the order of construction for each portion of the project. The plan will identify the most effective way to construct the project while keeping traffic flowing along the corridor.



Aerial views of the Gowen and Vista interchanges

THE PROCESS



ENVIRONMENTAL

WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS? WHY IS IT REQUIRED?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was signed into law in 1969. The act is considered to be the “national charter” for protection of the environment and has three major goals:

- Set national environmental policy
- Establish a basis for the Environmental Analysis
- Operate the Council on Environmental Quality

NEPA REQUIRES:

- That federally funded transportation projects are examined for potential impacts to social and environmental resources.
- That a full disclosure environmental document is prepared for any project likely to have environmental impacts.
- That impacts to the human and natural resources be balanced with the public’s need for a safe and efficient transportation system.

THE PROCESS

The environmental document process is carried out in several phases:

Step 1 – Scoping. The scoping phase identifies issues and notifies the public and federal, state and local agencies that an environmental document will be prepared for a specific project.

Step 2 – Analyze. All reasonable alternatives, including a “no-build” alternative are studied in detail with respect to the environmental impacts of the project.

Step 3 – Draft. The study data and analysis is compiled in a draft environmental document.

Step 4 – Public Review. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will publish the environmental document for public review and the transportation department will conduct a public hearing. The public hearing is usually held about a month after the publication date.

Step 5 – Final Document. Comments received at the public hearing and in writing will be addressed in the final environmental document. At that time, the transportation department and the FHWA will select the preferred alternative. The selection of the preferred alternative will be acknowledged in the final document.

A complete environmental analysis

will be done to follow the guidelines set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The environmental document will detail any issues that may arise as a result of the project. Some of the environmental issues that will be addressed in the environmental document are noise impacts, air quality, effects on surrounding neighborhoods and businesses, and impacts to wildlife and plant habitat. An approved environmental document is necessary to qualify for federal funding.

Field crews are currently conducting surveys, traffic counts, aerial mapping, noise studies and other environmental fieldwork in the project area.

While the fieldwork is taking place, the Idaho Transportation Department will be conducting public involvement activities, keeping people informed about the project and gathering input. Project engineers use public input the same way they use the information gathered from the fieldwork and surveys. Public input helps engineers develop projects that address the issues and concerns of the community.

WHEN WILL CONSTRUCTION BEGIN?

A construction date has not been determined. Several factors, including costs and availability of funding, will determine when the project can be built. The activities being performed during this phase of the project design will help the project team identify a construction timeline.



CONGESTION MANAGEMENT



Westbound traffic on I-84 near the Orchard Interchange

Congestion management options will be studied as part of the I-84 Orchard to Gowen project. Positive and negative impacts of several options designed to reduce congestion on I-84 will be studied. Some of these options include:

HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE LANES

The primary purpose of a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane is to increase the number of people traveling through a congested area by offering a substantial savings in travel time, as well as a reliable and predictable travel time. Carpoolers, vanpoolers and bus patrons are the main beneficiaries of HOV lanes allowing them to move through the congestion.

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) can be applied to vast transportation infrastructures. Information technologies and advances in electronics continue to revolutionize all aspects of the modern-day world, from homes and offices to schools and even recreation. Technology is also being applied to transportation networks. These technologies include the latest in computers, electronics, communications and safety systems.

Some of the key features of an ITS are:

- Traffic signal control
- Traffic detection sensors
- Closed circuit TV
- Variable message signs
- Ramp metering
- Traffic management center

PARK & RIDE

Free Park & Ride lots are located throughout Southwest Idaho and offer a place for commuters to park and collectively ride to work in a prearranged carpool, vanpool or on the bus. Lots are usually marked with green and white directional signs.

For more information on alternative modes of transportation, visit the ValleyRide website at www.valleyride.org

RELATED PROJECTS



Several additional construction projects are scheduled to improve the driving conditions within the project area. These projects will address immediate transportation needs and extend the life of the freeway until the I-84 Orchard to Gowen project can be completed. The projects will maintain, replace and repair various features on the freeway including pavement, overpass bridges, canal bridges and on-ramps.

Projects that are planned include:

I-84 Orchard Street to Isaac's Canyon

Purpose: Rehabilitate the existing pavement between the Orchard and Isaac's Canyon interchanges

When: Construction in 2006

Estimated Construction Cost: \$8,400,000

I-84 Union Pacific Railroad Bridge to Gowen Road Overpass

Purpose: Widen and resurface the Gowen Road west bound on-ramp and the railroad structure

When: Construction in 2003

Estimated Construction Cost: \$1,450,000

Orchard & Vista interchange bridges

Purpose: Bridge rehabilitation

When: Construction in 2008

Estimated Construction Cost: \$470,000

U.S. 20 Broadway Bridge over the New York Canal

Purpose: Bridge rehabilitation

When: Construction in 2003

Estimated Construction Cost: \$950,000